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Sprouting Fresh Ideas



Spring Priorities

Luann Shipley—Child Nutrition Director

Spring is a good time of the year to take a look at priorities and to recommit yourself to the goals set at the beginning of the year. At the State Office, our priorities are to increase the number of sponsors for our programs, to increase the types of programs offered by sponsors, and to increase the number of children fed.

These are hard economic times for many of Utah's citizens. Our programs offer a safety net to parents, making it possible for them to assure their children get healthy meals each day. Have you considered whether it is possible for your organization to offer other meals to the children? For example, if the school is eligible for an after school snack program, consider adding one. If the school currently does not offer breakfast, consider meeting with the superintendent and the principal to see if it is possible to add the program. If the site qualifies for summer meals, consider adding the program to assure children are fed when school is out for the year.

We'd like to encourage you to redouble your efforts to market school meals to the children in your facilities. If we can be of assistance, please contact us.

Wimba

Charlene Allert—NSLP Child Nutrition Assistant Director

We know that many districts and schools are limiting travel outside the district. In order to save district travel funds, we'll be conducting our Spring Business meeting via Wimba. Wimba is the name of the computer program which will allow us to meet with you. The word "Wimba" doesn't stand for anything (like "Google," which isn't an acronym either). It's a way to hold a meeting via a live Internet connection. It allows you to ask questions and see our presentations (but without having to travel to Fillmore or Salt Lake). If you use an LCD to project the presentation, your entire staff will be able to watch and participate without ever leaving your office.

In preparation for the Spring Business Meeting, each specialist will be holding a pre-business meeting Wimba session with the districts to which he/she is assigned. This will assure that each of you knows how to use the system. Watch your email for a link to the Wimba page. We look forward to trying this new technology and saving travel budgets for each of you.

Our hope is to be able to offer a series of training topics using this tool. The district will be able to run the Wimba session at any time (a managers' meeting, for example). In this way, districts throughout the state will be able to benefit from the information without ever having to travel. We hope you like this new tool!

Welcome

We've got a new specialist visiting the schools. Nicole Vance, started in November. She's a registered dietician who graduated from Weber State University.

Janelle Rose (our other registered dietician) will be taking some time off this summer to give birth to her first child.
Nicole will be handling all Janelle's SFAs while she's out of the office.

Issue Highlights

- Best Practices: SFSP Partnerships
- Nutrition: Eating Green
- SFSP
- Food For Thought: USDA Nutrition Messages
- Commodities Update
- Calendar of Events
- Recipe: Strawberry Melon Salad



UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION Child nutrition programs Mountain Plains Regional Office and State Agency staff attended the National Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Conference, *Summer* Food: Pathways to Success in Arlington, VA December 2-3, 2008.

The conference was well attended, with over 200 participants from FNS Regional Offices, State Agencies, advocacy groups and local sponsors. Partners from all across the nation were able to network and share best practices for expanding the SFSP to serve the maximum number of children with healthy, nutritious meals during the summer months.

Breakout sessions covered topics

ranging from Successful Community Strategies to Increase Participation, to Implementing the Simplified Summer Program and Integrating Health, Nutrition and Fitness in SFSP.

Maintaining program integrity in the SFSP was addressed with breakout sessions on Reviewing Financial Statements, Working with Vendors, and Innovations in Automated Systems.

The conference was the first one held since 2002; it was very energizing, and provided a great oppor-

tunity to share ideas and use the expertise of many dedicated SFSP partners in improving and expanding the SFSP. Director of Child Nutrition Programs Cynthia Long took time at the end of the conference to mention some of the hot SFSP topics that have been discussed during reauthorization.

FNS has now posted a summary of the public comments on the FNS website at www.fns.usda.gov from the public listening sessions sponsored by FNS in seven sites throughout the country, including Denver.

For additional information regarding topics or materials related to this conference, contact Matt Anderson.

Nutrition

It's so easy eating green! St. Patrick's day will be here soon, and what better way to celebrate than with a little extra green added to your meal? Foods like broccoli, kiwi fruit, celery, peas, romaine lettuce, spinach, zucchini, green apples, cucumbers, and asparagus are more than appropriate for the holiday, and they are full of important nutrients and health benefits.

Dark green veggies are great sources of vitamin C, vitamin K, and folate.

Fruits and veggies are also excellent sources of fiber and are low in calories and fat. Adding a splash of green to your plate will make any meal look fresh and tasty, adding to its visual appeal. It will taste better, too.

There are so many easy ways to eat more green:

 Add romaine lettuce or spinach leaves to your sandwich or in a salad to add nutrients and color.

- Nicole Vance—Specialist
- Raw broccoli, sugar snap peas, cucumbers, celery, and green peppers make great low-calorie snacks that are crispy and crunchy.
- Steamed green beans, asparagus, or zucchini are great sides to just about any meal. Peas can be a color addition to a stir fry or soup.
- Don't be afraid to try something new, like kiwi fruit, bok choy, or edamame.

Best Practices: SFSP and SSO Partnerships

Do you like to take on large amounts of responsibility, tightly holding onto every little decision, seeking little or no input from others who care about the very same things you do? If you do, then the Summer Food Service Program and the Seamless Summer Option are <u>not</u> for you. These two programs offer an opportunity to get the community involved like no other Child Nutrition Program. With a

slogan like "Kids Eat Free at the Summer Café," it is little wonder why so many communities show an interest in having a summer site in their area.

Keep in mind, just because you are the sponsor and fiscally responsible for the program, does not mean you are solely responsible for the success and operation of the program. Ask yourself the following questions:

What organizations or groups in my

Matt Anderson—Specialist

What organizations or groups in my community share an interest in the well being of children? Can these organizations help get the message out, and boost participation? Can any group help provide activities, learning opportunities, or entertainment. Are there volunteers who would be willing to work for free? Contact our office to learn how a Summer Food Program can be started in your community.

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2 LEARN RIGHT, BEE BRIGHT

Looking for ways to freshen up messages you send home to parents? Let USDA help! USDA has recently released sixteen Core Nutrition Education Messages aimed at three groups: mothers of preschoolers, mothers of elementary school-aged children, and 8- to 10-year old children.

Complete with supporting content, recipes, and other nutritious ideas, these messages are a call to action. Here are a couple of examples:



"Cook together. Eat together. Talk together. Make mealtime a family time." "They learn from watching you. Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will too."

Try using the messages in newsletters, on menus, or as an insert in school handbooks that go home. Even better, consider inviting parents to lunch and using them on table tents or handouts. At a time in our culture when families are eating together less and less, and parents are struggling to make time to cook, what could be more important than reinforcing the importance of healthy, fresh foods eaten together as a family?

The messages aren't only for parents. Five of the messages are aimed at 8-to10-year olds. With messages like, "Fuel up with fruits and veggies. And soar

through your day like a rocket ship," and, "Snack like a super hero. Power up with fruit and yogurt," theme weeks and promotional events in the lunchroom are made easy.

The messages are designed for use by nutrition educators and could be passed along to teachers for use in classrooms. The 8-10-year old messages also pair nicely with My Pyramid for Kids classroom materials on fruits and vegetables, which can be found on the Team Nutrition website under "Resource Library."

To view USDA's sixteen Core Nutrition Messages, supporting content, and guidance on implementation, go to http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/.

Commodities Update

Participation in the Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program has doubled in the last year. All schools had the opportunity to use a portion of their commodity funds from this program for next school year. With the push to include more fresh fruits and vegetables in meals, many schools are using a portion of their commodity funds to order through this program.

This program allows you the convenience of weekly delivery, easy online ordering, budgets balanced by the system, and control of product quality. If you ever have an issue with quality or shortages, enter the issue in the system within five days. As a state, we have two vendors who both work hard to provide the highest quality produce to our schools.

CNP Web Update

Commodity Ordering is available on CNP Web, and orders for the start of next school year should be placed in the system.

Further instructions will be made available as development of the new system rolls out.

Char Johnson — Technician

Commodity Workshop at SNAU





We are having a commodity processing networking session for the directors at SNAU Summer Conference. This will enable you to discuss commodity processing with the approved processors. The networking session will be Thursday, June 11 from 9:15—11:45 a.m. Samples will not be shown during this session . The vendor show that evening will provide an opportunity to sample products. Plan on attending to learn about commodity processing. You do not have to register for the conference to attend. A separate registration will be sent to non SNAU

Upcoming Events

USOE Training Opportunities:

- April 29, 2009: Spring Business Meeting via Wimba
- June 9-11, 2009: SNAU Summer Conference, Sandy
- June 16, 2009: New SFA Training, Salt Lake City
- August 4, 2009: Charter Training, Salt Lake City
- August/September (TBA): CRE/SMI Training, Salt Lake City

National Conferences:

- ◆ March 1-4, 2009: Legislative Action Conference, Washington D.C.
- June 29-July 2, 2009: Annual National Conference, Las Vegas NV

March Madness!!!

National Nutrition Month National Noodle Month National Salad Month

March 2-6—National School Breakfast Week

March 18—Oatmeal Cookie Day

March 26—Spinach Day

March 31—Tater Day

"Promote the nutritional well-being of the Utah public, with a focus on children, so they may reach their full potential."



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Submissions, suggestions, and comments are welcome.

Strawberry Melon Salad

Ingredients:

3/4 cup low fat lemon yogurt 1 tsp. lemon juice 1 tsp. sugar 1/8 tsp. cinnamon 2 cups cantaloupe balls 2 cups sliced strawberries 2 cups watermelon balls

Preparation:

In small bowl, mix yogurt, juice and cinnamon and blend well with wire whisk. Combine remaining ingredients in salad bowl and drizzle with salad dressing. Cover and chill until serving. Makes 4 servings.

Calories: 120g; Fat: 1 g; Sodium: 50 mg; Carbs: 22 g; Vitamin C:

120% DV; Vitamin A: 70% DV.

Source: http://busycooks.about.com

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